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WACHTER,THEMANOFAGADIR

beloved Wurttemberg, where he was spending Christmas. Like Billow, whose coming to power had also been hopefully acclaimed, he left the European situation worse than he found it. The edifice indeed was so fragile that every fresh shock left it debilitated, just as an ailing body is devitalized by successive operations, however successful they may seem at the time. No one imagined that Germany had wanted war; but the Agadir *coup* set the nerves of the Chancelleries on edge again just when they were beginning to recover from the Bosnian alarm. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of Kiderlen's desire for good relations with the Western Powers of which he had spoken to Take Jonescu, but he went the wrong way to work. He lacked both the imagination and the self-control needed for the highest tasks of diplomacy. In commenting on his death, Jules Cambon emphasized his outbursts of anger, his sarcasms and the bad condition of his nerves. Dr. Rosen, who subsequently held the same high office, goes so far as to say that a careful analysis of him both as man and politician would reveal a strong percentage of alcohol. Though French policy in the spring of 1911 was exasperating, the German reaction was inexcusably inept. Its result was registered in the following year in the Mediterranean agreement and the Grey-Cambon letters. The gulf between the Central Powers and the Triple Entente was widened. The diplomatic ground lost by Germany in 1911 was never fully regained, though Kiderlen did his best to repair the mischief he had caused. The cardinal error of post-Bismarckian statesmen in Germany was the simultaneous estrangement of England and Russia. That they deliberately worked for war is a legend, but their clumsy methods increased the stresses

from which it arose.

How Kiderlen would have handled the Serajevo crisis had he lived a little longer it is useless to speculate. "We must not be Austria's satellite in the Near East,"⁵ he remarked to the Chancellor in September, 1912, when the latter was about to visit Berchtold. Kuhlmann has expressed his belief that he would not have given Austria a blank cheque on July 5, 1914, and that he would have prevented the war. That he might have managed better than Bethmann and Jagow is quite possible, for no one could have done worse. Perhaps he might have helped to round one more awkward corner before the old Europe plunged headlong into the abyss. If the opening of the archives teaches one lesson more than another,